





CAL PARK HILL TUNNEL REHABILITATION & MULTI-USE PATHWAY

Informational Open House and Public Meeting – Meeting & Comment Summary May 22, 2006

On May 22, 2006, the second public meeting for the Cal Park Hill Tunnel Rehabilitation Project was held at the San Rafael Community Center in San Rafael. This report summarizes the process and comments of that meeting.

Purpose of Outreach Process

The purpose of this public outreach meeting was to update community members with information on the project status and design at the completion of the 60% design phase, and to gather input from the community that can help finalize design and project implementation. The outreach process for this project was designed to encourage broad community input. A final public meeting is expected to occur at the completion of the design phase of the project. Comments will also be accepted at anytime through the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) web site, or by mail. Contact information is provided at the end of this report.

NOTIFICATION

Extensive effort was devoted to informing the public about the meeting by using existing community resources and information networks. The project team sent meeting notifications via email to community groups, and email lists for community members in the project area and those who may be interested in the project. Groups and email lists included:

- Marin County Bicycle Coalition
- Marin Conservation League
- Marin Chapter of the Sierra Club
- Marin County Board of Education
- Friends of SMART
- Canal Alliance
- Marin Center for Independent Living
- Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) email list
- Marin County Board of Supervisors
- Attendants of the last Cal Park Hill Tunnel Public Meeting
- Attendants of the Greenbrae Interchange Meeting

- City Managers of San Rafael and Larkspur
- Technical Advisory Committee of the Cal Park Hill Tunnel Project.
- Business owners and managers in the Larkspur Landing Circle area

The emails gave a brief explanation of the project, and encouraged recipients to attend the Open House Public Meeting.

Paper flyers in both English and Spanish were distributed at the Canal Alliance office, Larkspur Landing Ferry, San Rafael Transit Center, and local libraries, and bicycle shops.

Advertisements, with a map of the project area, were placed in local newspapers including:

- A full-page newspaper advertisement with a map of the project area in the Marin Independent Journal on Thursday, May 18
- A quarter-page ad in the Commuter Times, which is distributed to Ferry passengers on Thursday, May 11th
- A quarter-page ad in the community newspapers including the Marin Scope, Ross Valley Reporter, Twin Cities Times, Mill Valley Herald, and News Pointer on Thursday, May 18th.

TAM also distributed a press release to local newspaper and TV outlets.

All meeting information was posted on the TAM website and the Marin County web site, and was announced verbally at several TAM and Marin County Board of Supervisors meetings.

All meeting notifications included a note that there would be a Spanish translator present at the meeting, and a phone number for those with hearing impairments or other communication-related disabilities to arrange for assistance at the meeting.

INFORMATIONAL OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC MEETING

Marin County and its partners, the Transportation Authority of Marin and SMART, organized an Informational Open House and Public Meeting held on Monday May 22, 2006. The Open House/Meeting was held at the San Rafael Community Center on B Street in San Rafael. Over 50 community members, elected officials and other interested parties attended. Elected officials attending the meeting included Marin County Supervisor Susan Adams, Larkspur Mayor Larry Chu, and Larkspur City Council member Joan Lundstrom.

The open house format provided an opportunity for participants to view exhibit boards with project information. Exhibit boards were organized into four topic areas: project overview, pathway connections, project operations and amenities, and project history. Team representatives were stationed with each set of exhibits to answer questions. Open house-style participation and viewing of exhibits was encouraged before and after the presentation portion of the meeting. Participants were provided with materials including an agenda and project description. Comment cards were available at the sign in table. All materials made available at the meeting, including the power point presentation used in the project, are included in Appendix A of this report.

The presentation included information on:

- Project history and status
- Scope, schedule and funding of the project

- Environmental clearances received and in process
- Status of pathway and tunnel design
- Operations, maintenance and emergency planning
- Southern Connection options

Following the presentation, the meeting was opened up to questions and comments from participants. Meeting participants had an opportunity to comment in a number of different media and formats, including commenting verbally when the topic was discussed during the meeting, commenting in writing via the comment cards provided, and at any time following the meeting, commenting electronically via the TAM website http://www.tam.ca.gov/.

KEY ISSUES & CONCERNS

Approximately 40 public comments were submitted. Below is a summary of the comments received to date in all formats, summarizing the major issues and concerns of participants, grouped into general topic areas.

Appendix B is a transcription of all verbal and written comments made at the meeting, and all comments submitted in writing after the meeting.

Because this was the second public meeting, comments tended to be more detail-oriented than in the previous public meeting. Discussions focused on accommodations for the disabled, tunnel security, and hours of operation, with these last two topics often combined into one issue.

ADA Compliance

Representatives from the disabled community were concerned with ADA compliance on the path and the southern access to the tunnel. The team responded that the County will design the pathway and its connections to be fully ADA-compliant.

Security and Hours of Operation

The topic receiving most discussion concerned the hours of operation of the proposed facility, particularly as related to security.

Representatives from the City of Larkspur stated that they would like to have the tunnel closed at night because of concerns for safety. Homeless encampments in the vicinity were cited as a potential threat to pathway users. In the past, when the tunnel was not in use there was a fire in the tunnel, resulting in a collapse. The remoteness of this tunnel would make it difficult to ensure security during hours when the tunnel is lightly used. The Larkspur elected officials requested these issues be addressed in the Memo of Understanding (MOU), which will also cover the operational responsibilities of the tunnel.

The majority of public comments received at the meeting support extended hours of operation for the tunnel. One suggested plan was to close the tunnel based on the ferry schedule – closing a half hour after the last ferry arrived, and opening a half hour before the first ferry leaves in the morning. However, several people cited examples where users are not ferry riders, but are traveling to and from some of the businesses in the area which are open quite late, including the Larkspur Landing Theater with shows ending around midnight, and the Marin Brewing Company, which is open until 1am on weekend evenings.

One participant said that if the tunnel were closed at night, in order to go north to San Rafael, cyclists would have to go east on Sir Frances Drake Blvd. and then make a left turn onto Anderson Drive, across 4 lanes of traffic in the dark. She suggested that even at night, the tunnel would be safer than this route. Other

participants commented on the inconvenience to the public of having the pathway closed at any time. The project team is aware of no multi-use pathway tunnels in the US that are closed for any portion of the day. In Marin, unpaved recreation trails are closed at dusk, but all paved pathways are currently open at all times.

Members of the public focused on ways to assure security in the tunnel and suggested possible mitigation measures. These measures included monitoring cameras at certain hours; requiring a remote person to monitor and allow access at certain times of day, installing mirrors to improve visibility and other techniques to reduce risk.

Other Comments

One participant urged TAM to do further outreach to the Canal residents, and to provide Spanish translation at the meetings. Translation was provided for this meeting; however, no participants indicated a need for translation.

NEXT STEPS

The 60% design process is currently being reviewed by the Cities of San Rafael and Larkspur, and the property owner SMART. Final design is scheduled to begin in June. The design process is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2006. A final public meeting will likely be held at the conclusion of the design process. Information will be provided on the project website as the County and Cities hold publicly noticed meetings to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding and tunnel operations.

Public comments may be made at any time to:
Bill Whitney
Transportation Authority of Marin
PO Box 4186
San Rafael, CA 94913
bwhitney@co.marin.ca.us

3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 304 San Rafael, CA 94903 (415) 499-6528 (415) 499-3799 Fax

Appendices

Appendix A - Materials Presented at Meeting

- A1. Meeting Agenda
- A2. Project Information Sheet
- A3. Presentation slides

Appendix B - Comments from Participants



Cal Park Hill Bike and Pedestrian Pathway Public Meeting Agenda 22 May 2006

San Rafael Community Center, 618 B Street

6:30 pm Open House

7 pm to 8:30 pm Presentation

1. Project Overview (Bill Whitney)

- Project Overview
- Recent Progress and Schedule
- Environmental Clearance

2. Project Update (John Hugunin, Michael Jones, Bill Whitney)

- Engineering Design Status (John Hugunin)
 - i. Tunnel
 - ii. Pathway
 - iii. Auburn Street Bridge
- Pathway Amenities, Landscaping and Signage (Michael Jones)
 - i. Northern Trailhead
 - ii. Southern Trailhead
 - iii. Along the Pathway
- Operations/Maintenance/Emergency Access (Bill Whitney)
 - i. Agency Responsibilities/Draft MOU
 - ii. Emergency Access to pathway and tunnel
 - iii. Security, communications, other recommendations

3. Design and Operation Decisions (JH and BW)

- Pathway operations (Bill Whitney)
 - i. Hours of operation
 - ii. Separation from rail side within tunnel (before rail implementation)
- Southern Pathway connections (David Parisi)
 - i. Six Pathway options
 - ii. Criteria/Process for narrowing options
 - iii. Preferred Pathway Connection Options D, with further study of Option C
- 4. Schedule/Next Steps (Bill Whitney/Bonnie Nelson)
- 5. Open Discussion, Questions, Comments (Bonnie Nelson)

Cal Park Hill Tunnel

TUNNEL REHABILITATION & MULTI-USE PATH

Restoring the Cal Park Hill Tunnel for bicycle and pedestrian travel, and potential passenger rail shared use.



WHY:

To update you on the progress of this project and get your input on design and operational proposals

WHEN:

May 22nd 6:30 to 8:30 PM

WHERE:

San Rafael Community Center at 618 B Street

MORE INFO:

contact Bill Whitney at 415.507.2810



RECENT PROGRESS

The Cal Park project has just received NEPA clearance! This allows the project team to pursue other necessary permits, and is a key step for the project to remain on schedule.

Engineering and design work has been proceeding steadily. The thirty percent design process is now complete and work on sixty percent design should be completed by the end of April. Meetings with the public, property owners, County Parks and Open Space staff, and emergency service providers have been important in shaping key design decisions.

SECURITY AND EMERGENCY ACCESS PLAN

With the help of emergency providers, a draft emergency access plan has been devised which includes the following recommendations:

- "Blue light" stations with emergency telephones within the tunnel
- Security cameras connected directly to the internet for surveillance by emergency responders and the public.
- Cable in the tunnel to allow radio and cellular phone communications
- Mile-post markers within the tunnel, as location references
- Emergency vehicle access and turnarounds
- Regular patrols
- Develop MOU with SMART and Cities outlining roles/responsibilities

PATHWAY AMENITIES

Significant amenities, including landscaping and other treatments, will be limited to the trailheads with a more significant treatment at the northern terminus in San Rafael. Trailheads will provide information about hours of operation, trail regulations, and the historical significance of this trailway. Historic markers will also be incorporated along the trail as appropriate.



Cal Park Hill Tunnel

TUNNEL REHABILITATION & MULTI-USE PATH



Option D existing (above) A possible design (below)





Option C existing (above) A possible design (below)



HOURS OF OPERATION

The tunnel will be designed to incorporate gates that can be closed during low-use overnight hours. The specific hours of operation will be designated in a Memorandum of Understanding with the County Parks and Open Space Department, who will be responsible for maintaining the project, and the adjacent cities. Hours of operation may be adjusted seasonally, or based on operational experience.

AUBURN STREET BRIDGE

The bridge at Auburn Street will be a steel prefabricated bridge with a concrete deck. This will provide a comfortable crossing for bicyclists and will minimize future maintenance needs. It will aesthetically complement the existing adjacent railroad bridge.

SOUTHERN TERMINUS CONNECTIONS

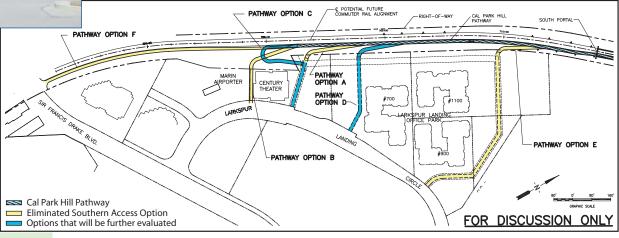
Five options for the southern terminus alignment were considered. Using the criteria listed below, and input from the public meeting and affected property owners these options have been narrowed down to Options C and D, as shown in the map below.

- Use of easement/public right-of-way
- Conflict points with vehicle traffic
- Connection at Larkspur Landing Circle
 Emergency vehicle access
- Pathway type separated or shared with vehicles

User functionality (convenience/usability/ADA accessibility)

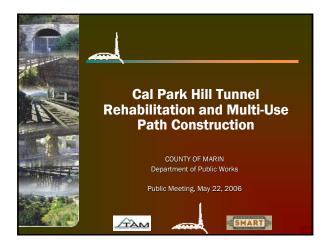
- Compatibility with Central Marin Ferry Connector
- Compatibility with SMART planning

Southern Terminus Options

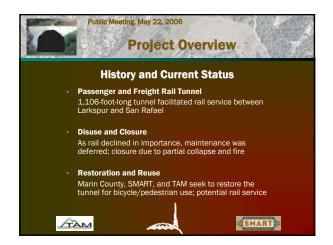


• Impacts to trees

• Ease of maintenance



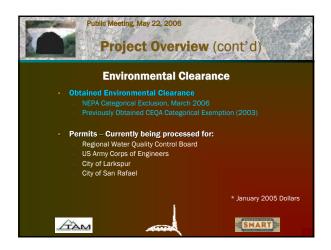






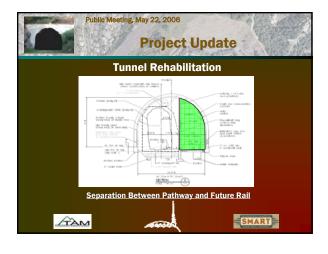






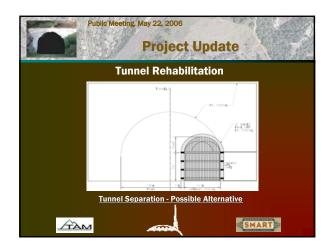


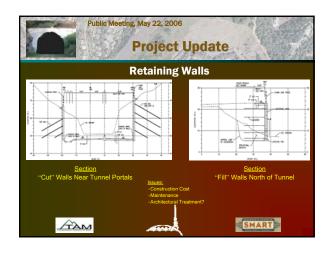










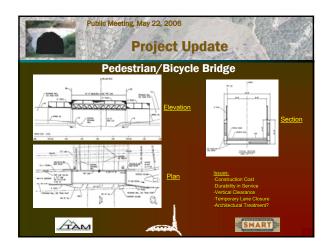




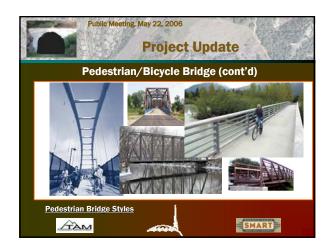


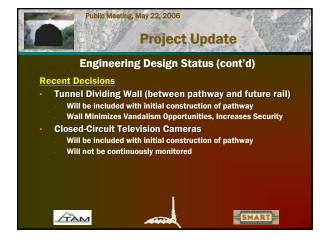




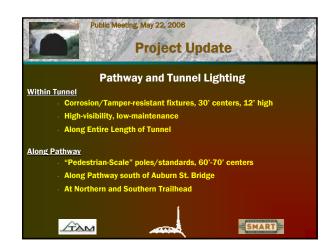


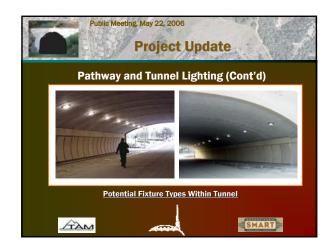




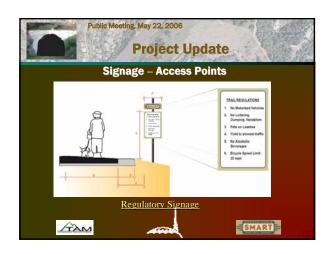








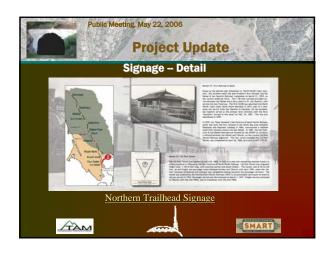




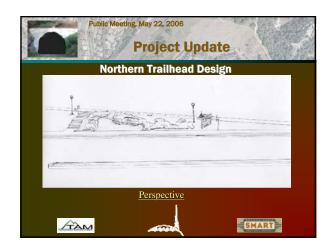














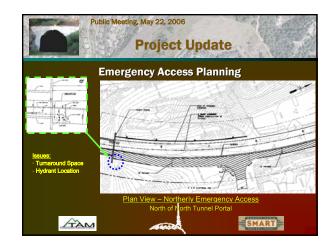


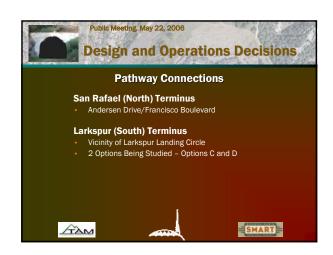






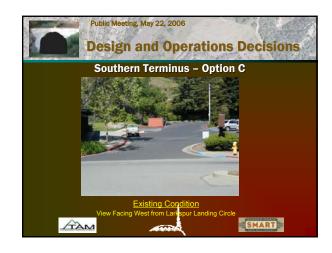




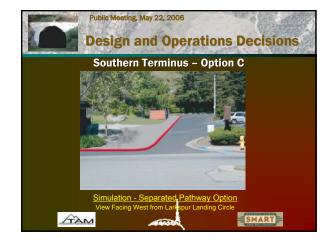








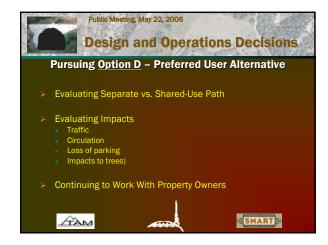
















Appendix B. Comments from Participants

Cal Park Tunnel Rehabilitation - Public Meeting, May 22 2006, San Rafael

Topic	Comment
ADA	I'm very concerned about what I see as a lack of ADA-accessibility at the northern entrance. The connection at Bellam should be completely accessible. Is there an ADA consultant on the design team?
ADA	I am hearing this called a bike path a lot. This path is also for pedestrians and the disabled in wheelchairs. I am also very concerned about the grade at the south entrance being ADA-compliant.
Amenities	How wide is the actual pathway through the tunnel?
Amenities	Is there an emergency turn-around within the tunnel?
Amenities	The presentation said there would be few or no benches along the path. Walkers need a place to rest, especially if they are older or with small children, or injure themselves.
Connections	The official position of the MCBC is to support Option D, while meeting all the ADA requirements.
Connections	(written) Of the southern terminus options provided, pathway option "D" would be preferable. Please note that there should be stop signs on both sides of the "possible design" crosswalk, and I would prefer the raised design, to assist in traffic calming.
Connections	(written comment) It will be important to choose the southern terminus option that will decrease the exposure that pedestrians and bicyclists have with vehicles. Pathway option D is the straightest route from the terminus to the ferry and the safest.
Connections	Alternatives C and D could be short-term alternatives; when the Greenbrae Interchange is finished, bikes can go over the trestle and down to the ferry or the end of the ferry overpass with fewer obstacles.
Connections	I prefer that the most direct route from the path to the ferry be selected. This would pass through the Larkspur Landing Shopping Center and use the existing pedestrian bridge.
Connections	College of Marin students take night classes, and would want to use this to go back over to San Rafael.
Funding	What is the cost allocation for the tunnel vs. the rest of the facility? This is a very expensive project. What is the cost per user or cost per mile?
Funding	They are in favor of the tunnel being open 24 hours a day. Is there money in the budget available for someone to monitor the tunnel, at least in the first year?
Funding	How much does it cost to open and close the tunnel?
General	People have a hard time reading the maps at the presentation. Make things more obvious, like the tunnel entrance.
Hours	Lots of comments about whether the tunnel is more secure with 24/7 access. It was suggested that a test period be run where it is open 24/7. Not all users will be riding the ferry. This is a real opportunity for a transportation link; people will use this 24 hours a day.

Topic	Comment
Hours	On the Golden Gate Bridge, they have a system where you go up to a monitor and the attendants buzz you through. Could we incorporate this into the design? This is a transportation facility and access is important.
Hours	This is a transportation facility, and as such, should be open 24/7. It should be open 24/7 for at least the first year.
Hours	I really want to speak to the 24 hour access. I really support it. If someone tries to use it and finds it closed, they will never try it again.
Hours	Please note that in the winter, closing the pathway at dusk means at 4:30, before the first commuter ferry even lands.
Hours	(written) By comments made in the recent meeting, it is clear that opening the tunnel on a 24 hour basis is both cheaper and safer to the community. I currently commute through this area (by) bicycle, and would need a dependable route which is not limited by ferry schedules and/or sunset times. I am very concerned that a nighttime closure of the tunnel could create a situation where I might be forced to use unlit roadways which are historically and demonstrably unsafe (due to oncoming traffic speeds when the route forces a left turn on Anderson). I urge you to support a 24 hour access policy for this facility.
Hours	Are there any other pathways open 24 hours in the US?
Hours	(written comment) The tunnel should be open for 24 hours a day. My first reason is rate of return on this investment. Closing the tunnel at certain hours will discourage potential users. It is important to encourage the greatest number of users. Two, it is my opinion that crime will not increase in the well-lit, 'surveillanced', and well-used tunnel. Third, this is an opportunity to create a transportation facility that will accommodate a wide spectrum of users, not just ferry users.
Hours	Let's try having it open 24 hours first, instead of assuming it's going to be dangerous. Maybe even pipe in some elevator music.
Hours	I am concerned about late evening and early morning tunnel closure. The disabled can't get paratransit late or early; there isn't alternative access between the communities. They need access to businesses, restaurants, the Brewery, and movie theater. These close late.
Hours	Any discussion around keeping it open should be connected to the hours of operation of the businesses at Larkspur Landing. For example, the Brewing Company is very popular and doesn't close until late. This would be a likely way for patrons to get back to San Rafael.
Hours	I am very concerned that we are spending \$17 million on a facility, for it not to be open 24 hours a day, especially when the perceived dangers are contrary to researched evidence. Can we stream video to the internet?
Hours	Just thinking, if I'm a canal resident, and work in central Marin, I would want to use this to get home after work closes.
Other	(written) I question why the rails need to go in before the bike/ped path. Even with the path in place, the remaining space will be as wide or wider than a single-bore tunnel, such as Puerto Suelo Hill.
Outreach	Are we communicating enough with the Spanish-speaking community?

Topic	Comment
Security	Will there be call boxes?
Security	There are existing homeless encampments near the south end of the path (the north end of the tunnel). Joe Garbarino testified that there is a homeless encampment on his property. These are dangerous people, people doing drugs. The tunnel access is remote, with no access to roadways. There is a bend in the tunnel, so you can't see through to the other end. All you need is one lawsuit; it's a genuine issue.
Security	(written) Suggest that a local security firm could be contracted to monitor the video and to buzz people in and out of the tunnel at night. This may be quite economical - even cheaper than closing.
Security	I understand the safety issues. With regard to the homeless encampment, this is always an issue with open space. Isn't that something that can be cleaned up?
Security	RE homeless encampments: Is there a law about destroying homeless encampments? Just dismantle them, it shouldn't be difficult to remove them.
Security / curve in tunnel	Is there a chance the tunnel can be straightened?
Security / curve in tunnel	Keep in mind not to have any unseen dead space in the tunnel or on the path where someone can hide unseen.
Security / curve in tunnel	Perhaps mirrors could be put in to see around corners?
Security / hours	I commute by bicycle to SF from Novato, over Wolfe Grade. I agree with the 24-hour access. Suggestions: Put a monitor in the dispatch stations or police stations, and just periodically check it; once in a while, glance at it. That way it is being monitored by someone as part of their job. Have cameras placed so that the whole tunnel is visible.
Security / hours	When you design tunnels, if you have lights and cameras, then it changes the whole feeling of the tunnel. It feels more secure, and people won't go there to commit crimes or hang out. Have signs that say the tunnel is being monitored 24 hours a day.
Security / hours	(written comment) Why not have the closed circuit television monitored by Twin Cities and San Rafael Police Departments when it's dark? It's important that the tunnel be open as many hours as possible - 24/7 if at all possible!
Security / hours	If the tunnel were closed, I would have to go up Sir Frances Drake, and then left onto Anderson, to go into town. A bicyclist was killed on Sir Frances Drake recently. I would feel safer in a lighted tunnel than on those roads at night.
Signage	(written comment) Proposed sign advises that slow users have priority. I suggest this wording be kept, but with one addition: "Slow users keep right". On existing multi-use paths, I as a cyclist have trouble avoiding slower users. Often they walk or cycle in the middle of the path, and though I slow and ring my bell and otherwise make them aware of my presence, I never know whether they'll jump right or left or left and then right! Consider also that many cycle commuters are similar to driver commuters: they have their trip timed to the last nanosecond. Let's keep these faster riders on their own portion of the path, towards the center. The yellow line mentioned at the May 22 meeting will also help keep all users organized and safe. However, responsibility for safety on the path should not be assigned to only one category of user. Everyone should exercise courtesy and common sense and be reminded by appropriate rules. Thank you all for your hard work on this important project.
Ventilation	Wanted to know more about ventilation in the tunnel. Will emergency vehicles be low emission?